

near Norwalk," is rubbish, first, because Abigail the Swamp-fight was in Rhode Island, December Jonathan Stevenson was alive in 1677, on was granted him for his services in that fight!

ed up three Johns—the first, the husband of and of Abigail, and the third, the son of John³ Ambury, before his father, and made a will in second John, the copy and the original of which is dated Dec. 25, 1706, and the year is writ-
strument. But enough of this. Some of the-
ness in copying, by one not familiar with the
re due, like one just mentioned, to ignorance;
used by the identity of names; while the state-
e in the "Assurance," aged 20 in 1635, was
Bouton, of France, said in the "History of Fair-
born in 1598, is as absurd as it is impossible,
Nicholas given in the "History" be correct. It
at he was a relative of John Bowghton, of
nmoned before the Vicar-General, March 2,
conformity in Essex, by Rev. T. W. Davids,
i. Mem., I., 119.) Finally, for amusement,
rs, let the reader familiar with French her-
go concerning the Bouton arms [in the B.-B.
n given of the blazon.

that corrections of genealogical matter in the
e following. My informant was Judge Ulysses

h Clara,* dau. of Arba⁴ and Esther (Chamber-
th Chloe, and she married, not John, but Ulysses
er was Chloe Bradley Marvin.
several sources, and Judge Marvin is good au-
of the whole family. Elizabeth Chloe died in
W. T. R. MARVIN.

MASON FAMILY.

Some of the descendants of Major John Mason, the Conqueror of the Pequots.

[Communicated by Hon. REUBEN H. WALWORTH, of Saratoga Springs.]

I Gen. Major JOHN MASON, born in England, about 1600, was a Lieut. in the army, and served in the Netherlands under Sir Thomas Fairfax. He emigrated to America about 1630, settled in Dorchester, and represented that town in the General Court. In Oct. 1635, he removed to Windsor, Ct., in company with the Rev. John Warham, Henry Wolcott, Esq., and others of the first settlers of that town; where he was elected an Assistant or Magistrate of the colony in 1642. In May, 1637, he commanded the successful expedition against the Pequots, near New London. He m. about 1640, Anne —, and in 1647 removed his family to Saybrook. In 1660 he became one of the first settlers of Norwich; where he was Deputy Governor and Major General of the forces of the colony. He d. 30 Jan. 1672, at Norwich, where his widow d. very shortly afterwards.

Their children were:—(1) *Priscilla*, [†] b. Oct. 1641, at Windsor, m. Rev. James Fitch;—(2) *Samuel*, [†] b. July, 1664, at W., m. 1, —; 2, Elizabeth Peck;—(3) *John*, [†] b. Aug. 1646, at W., m. Abigail Fitch;—(4) *Rachel*, b. Oct. 1648 at Saybrook, m. 12 June, 1678, Charles Hill of New London, son of George Hill of Derbyshire, Eng., and d. 4 April 1679, at N. L., in giving birth to twins, who d. with her;—(5) *Anne*, [†] b. June, 1650, at S., m. Capt. John Brown, of Swansey;—(6) *Daniel*, [†] b. April, 1652, at Saybrook, m. 1, Margaret Denison, 2, —; 3, Rebecca Hobart;—(7) *Elizabeth*, b. Aug. 1654, at S., who prob. d. unm.

II Gen. 1. *PRISCILLA MASON*, m. Oct. 1664, Rev. James Fitch, first minister of Norwich, b. 24 Dec. 1622, at Bocking in Eng., came to America in 1638, and was ordained as the minister of Saybrook in 1646. She was his second wife. [By his first wife Abigail Whitfield, who d. 9 Sept. 1659, at S., he had 6 children; James, b. 2 Aug. 1649, who m. twice, and d. at Canterbury; Abigail, b. 5 Aug. 1650, prob. m. Capt. John Mason; Elizabeth, b. 2 Jan. 1652, m. Rev. Edward Taylor; Hannah, b. 17 Sept. 1653; Samuel, b. April, 1655, and Dorothy, b. April, 1658, m. Nathaniel Bissell.] Rev. James Fitch d. 18 Nov. 1702, at Lebanon. His children by his last wife, Priscilla Mason, were:—(8) *Daniel*, b. Aug. 1665, at Norwich. He m. and settled at New London North Parish, now Montville, and had a family of children. My information as to most of his family and descendants is very imperfect, but I have ascertained that he had at least three children; 1. *Daniel*, who m. Sarah —, and d. in 1755, leaving a property worth from forty to fifty thousand dollars, and leaving a widow surviving him, and two sons and 7 daughters, who were living at the date of his will, in May, 1755; to wit: Samuel Sherwood, James, Abiah, Rachel, Eleanor, Sarah, Mary, Anne, and Abigail; 2. *Capt. Adonijah*, of Montville, who m. twice. I have not been able to ascertain his first wife's name, or all his children by her. For his second wife he m. 22 April, 1744, Anne (Hyde) Gray, dau. of Samuel Hyde and Elizabeth Calkins of Lebanon, and wid. of Simon Gray of L. Anne Fitch, dau. of Capt. Adonijah, by his first wife, m.

war he went to St. Johns, L. C., (?) where he died. Their children were (170) *Anne*, b. 18 April, 1747, at Providence, m. 29 Nov. 1767, father's second cousin, Major Ebenezer Whiting, b. May, 1735, youngest son of Lieut. Charles Whiting and Elizabeth Bradford, a descendant of Gov. William Bradford, and of John Alden and Priscilla Mullins, of Mayflower. They settled at Norwich, and he was an officer in the army and d. 6 Sept. 1794, at Westfield, Mass., she d. 27 June, 1827. Their children were:—1, *Augustus*, m. Elizabeth Hoes; 2, *Edward*, m. Nancy Perkins; 3, *Henry*, m. Nancy Goodwin, and was brevet Brig. Gen. in U. S. army, and d. 10 Sept. 1851 at St. Louis; 4, *Nancy*, m. Gordon; 5, *Charles*, m. Margaret Regis and lived at Kinderhook, N. Y.; 6, *Bowen*, m. Nancy McKinsty, and was a lawyer and settled at Geneva, N. Y., and was circuit judge for the 7th circuit; 7, *Elizabeth*, m. 7 Jan. 1767, Ebenezer Backus, b. 17 Aug. 1747, at Norwich, son of Ebenezer Backus, Esq., of N. by his 2d wife Eunice Dyer. They settled at N., and had 5 children; 1, *Eunice*, b. 5 May, 1768, at N.; 2, *Eleazer Fitch*, b. 13 Jan. 1770, at N., m. Harriet Whiting, b. 14 Feb. 1779, youngest dau. of Col. William Bradford Whiting and Amie Lathrop of Canaan, N. Y. They settled at Albany, where she d. 13 Jan. 1804, leaving one child. He then m. 8 June, 1807, Elizabeth Chester, b. 10 Nov. 1774, at Weathersfield, eldest dau. of Col. John Chester and Elizabeth Huntington, and had by her three children; Rev. Joseph Trumbull Backus, D. D., Presbyterian clergyman at Schenectady, N. Y.; Rev. John Backus, D. D., Presbyterian clergyman at Baltimore, Md.; Mary the wife of James Bayard, Esq., of Philadelphia; 3, *Elizabeth*, b. 22 March, 1775; 4, *Alexander*, b. 5 May, 1777; 5, *Lydia*, m. 21 Nov. 1801, Nathan Whiting, b. 16 May, 1772, son of Col. William Bradford Whiting and Amie Lathrop of Canaan, N. Y., and d. 1 Dec. 1828. New Haven, had 4 sons and 3 daus.; 6, *Julia*, m. 1, Ebenezer Jones of Troy, N. Y., and 2, Samuel Cheever, and had children by each;—(171) *Amey*, b. 20 June, 1751, at W., m. 12 April, 1781, William Temple of Boston, and had by him one son, Robert, who settled at Rutland, Vt., and had a family. After the death of her first husband, Mrs. Amy (Fitch) Temple m. 29 March, 1790, Isaac Clark of Castleton, Vt., who was Col. in the army of the U. S. in the war of 1812, and had children by him;—(173) *Thomas Mason*, b. 9 Oct. 1753, at W.;—(174) *Phileas*, b. 4 July, 1755, at W.;—(175) *Henry*, b. 12 Oct. 1757, at W.;—(176) *Sarah*, b. 18 Jan. 1760, at W., m. 1784, Hezekiah Perkins of Norwich, son of Jacob Perkins and Jemima Leonard, and grandson of Jabez Perkins the first and Hannah Lathrop of N. They settled at Norwich and had 6 children; Francis Asher; Eliza Leonard d. in infancy; George Leonard; Charlotte; Henry Fitch; and a dau. who d. in childhood. (177) *Mary*, b. 22 Nov. 1761, at W.;—(178) *Christopher*, 23 Aug. 1763, prob. m. 29 April, 1784, Lydia Ripley, of W., and had 4 children recorded to them at W.; 1, *Thomas Mason*, b. 18 Jan. 1785; 2, *Henry*, b. 15 March, 1787; 3, *Lacy*, b. 17 July, 1789; and 4, *Erasmus Ripley*, b. 9 May, 1792;—(179) *Frances*, b. 27 Aug. 1765, at W., m. 1792, Bela Backus of W.;—(180) *George*, b. 7 March, 1768, at W.;—(181) *Lacy*, b. 20 May, 1771, at W., m. 1790, Lebbeus Larabee of W.

IV Gen. 87. *MARY WORTHINGTON*, m. 14 Feb. 1745, Aaron Elliot, b. 15 March, 1718, at Killingworth, second son of Rev. Jared Elliot, D.

Elizabeth Smithson, and g. g. son of John Eliot the apostle. He was a physician, and they settled at K., where he was Col. of militia, and frequently elected to the general assembly. She d. 28 June, 1785, at K. Their children were:—(182) *Hannah*, b. 1746, at K., m. 23 Nov. 1773, Gen. Reuben Hopkins, b. 1 June 1718, at Amenia, N. Y. He was a lawyer, and they settled at Charlotte removed to Goshen, N. Y., where he was a Brig. Gen. of militia and commanded a brigade of militia in the service of the U. S., at Plattsburgh in the war of 1812, and d. about 1819, in Ill. They had 8 children; 1, *Eliot*, b. 12 Sept. 1774, m. Julia Howell, 16 Jan. 1815, at Cincinnati, and had 6 children; 2, *Benjamin Bronson*, b. 16 March, 1776, married, and 26 Sept. 1852, d. at Augusta, Ga., and had a family of children; 3, *Mary*, b. 2 Dec. 1777, d. in 1820 at Cincinnati, unm.; 4, *Adeline*, b. 3 March, 1780, m. at Goshen, N. Y., where she d. 3 March, 1840 d. at St. Louis, Mo., leaving a large family; 5, *Rebecca*, b. 16 Jan. 1782, m. and d. 3 April, 1816, Ontario co., N. Y.; 6, *William Hector*, b. 12 Nov. 1784, m. and d. Aug. 1788, m. and settled at Goshen, N. Y., s. p.; 7, *Hannibal Mason*, b. 1792, m. and 28 May, d. 1823, at Madison, Ga.;—(183) *Mary*, b. 25 July, 1752, at K., m. about 1798, Dr. Christopher Fly of Lyme, son of Daniel Fly. She was his 3d wife, and d. s. p.;—(184) *Samuel Smithson*, b. 2 July, 1753, at K. He m. 17 March, 1779, Margaret Williams, b. May 1753, dau. of Judge John Williams of Sharon. They settled at Sharon, where she d. 27 Oct. 1802. He had by her 8 children, 1, *Samuel Williams*, b. 31 March, 1780, m. 31 Jan. 1809, Sarah Canfield, b. Dec. 1787, at New Milford, settled at Northampton, N. Y., and removed to Penfield, where he d. 30 Aug. 1831, and had 6 sons and 4 daus.; 2, *William Worthington*, b. 21 April, 1782, at S., m. Jan. 1809, Eunice Jones of Ballston, N. Y., settled at Northampton, N. Y., removed to Sharon Spa, and in 1826 to Niles, Mich., and d. 13 Oct. 1839, and had 5 children; Eunice Harriet m. Allen G. Kellogg; William Sidney m. 1836, Louisa Carrington, and 30 Nov. 1844, Caroline Morse, and 5 children; and Caroline Elizabeth, m. John Orr, of Niles, Mich.; 3, *Hannah*, b. 12 May, 1784, at S., m. 1814, Daniels B. Stowe of Claverack, N. Y., and had one child, and d. 12 May, 1830; 4, *Margaret*, b. 19 May, 1786, at S., m. 6 Sept. 1811, Salmon Hunt of Sharon, removed to Northampton, N. Y., and then to Rochester, where she d. 4 Nov. 1836. She had 3 sons and 3 daus.; 5, *John Aaron*, b. 16 Oct. 1788, at S., m. 4 Nov. 1809, Joanna Bailey of S., removed to Redhook, N. Y., and afterwards returned to S., where she d. 11 Jan. 1848. He had by her 6 sons and 4 daus. He then m. 8 Nov. 1848, Hannah Eliza Jancey; 6, *Mary*, b. 13 April, 1791, at S., m. Festus Demming of Goshen, N. Y., and removed to Goshen, O., where she d. Dec. 1827. He had by her 3 sons and 3 daus.; 7, *Joseph Benjamin*, b. 23 July, 1794, at S., m. 1814, Hannah Waldo of Chatham, N. Y., and removed to Northampton, N. Y., and d. 20 Dec. 1820, and had 2 children; Hannah Cornelia, m. Sylvester Jewells of Chatham, and Samuel Waldo; 8, *Elizabeth*, b. 22 July, 1796, at S., m. 28 May, 1838, Rev. Noah Cook of Bertrand, Mich., and was living at Woodville, Ill., s. p.

After the death of his first wife, Samuel Smithson Elliot m. 17 July, 1833, Sarah Bailey, b. 19 Dec. 1765, at Sharon, and d. 22 April, 1812. He had by her two other children; 9, *Isaac*, b. 9 July, 1806, at S., m. 11 March, 1834, Sarah Hurd, b. 28 Jan. 1816, dau. of Arba Hurd of Pitts-

William
Henry I 1100 - 1135 King of England
Matilda

Stephen 1135 - 1154 King of England and
Matilda d. 1167 Lady of the English

Henry II 1153 - 1189 King of England

↓ Eleanor

SON

Richard I - the Lionhearted 1189 - 1199
married French Alice sister of King Phillip
crusader

SON

↓ John 1199 - 1216 King of England
Magna Carta

↓ Henry III 1216 - 1272
m. Eleanor of Provence

Edward I 1272 - 1307

↓ m. Eleanor of Castile

Edward II 1307 - 1327

Edward III 1327 - 1377

Richard II 1377 - 1399

m. Anne - Bohemian

Henry IV 1399 - 1413

Henry V 1413 - 1422

Henry VI 1422 - 1461 1470 - 1471

Edward IV 1461 - 1470 1471 - 1483



Richard III 1483-1485

Henry VII 1485-1509

Henry VIII 1509-1547

Catherine, Anne Bolgyn, Jane Seymour -- Anne + Catherine

Edward VI 1547-1553

King at 9 yrs. - died t.B. 1553

MARY I 1553-1558

m. Phillip of Spain

Elizabeth I 1558-1603

James VI & I 1603-1625

Charles I 1625-1649

Oliver Cromwell

Edward, the Confessor 1042 - 1066

poor judgment Religious
childlike nature friend of Normans

HAROLD II - 1066 No Royal blood

EARL of East Anglia - 1044

EARL of Wessex - 1053

William the Conqueror 1066 - 1087 (son of Robert I the Magnificent Duke of Normandy)

Duke of Normandy

MARRIED Matilda - count of Flanders's daughter

PROBABLY promised English throne by Edward, the Confessor

defeated HAROLD II at Battle of Hastings

Took 3 years to complete submission of the rest of England + Scotland + Wales

Favorite son



William II Rufus - 1087 - 1100

Secured realm's frontiers

made Westminster administrative center

younger brother

wide support from nobles, bishops
unmarried, childless



Shot accidentally while hunting 1100

Henry I - 1100 - 1135

Educated, strong, stocky, cruel, lustful,
stern - put his brother Robert, Duke of Normandy in prison for life.

As interested in Normandy as in England
MARRIED Matilda, daughter of Malcolm Canmore
King of Scots

Got sick on eels + died

nephew



Stephen 1135 - 1154 + Matilda

Son of Adela, Conqueror's daughter
(MARRIED to Matilda's niece)

Constant Civil War between Stephen + Matilda
Got sick, wife died + son + heir

Henry II - 1153 - 1189

Oldest son of Matilda & 2nd husband
Geoffrey of Anjou

married Eleanor of Aquitaine

9 children in 13 years

King Stephen adopted Henry as son & heir
wife & sons quarrelsome

son
↓

Richard I, the Lion-Heart 1189 - 1199

crusader

didn't spend much time in England

married Alice, sister of Phillip II of France

killed in war

John 1199 - 1216

cruel, suspicious, untrustworthy, violent

→ youngest son of Henry II & Eleanor

- of the Magna Carta -

made heir on Richards death but even tho they were
at odds

Civil War 1215 - forced to sign Magna Carta

died after consuming peaches & beer

Robert de Gernon

William de Gernon-Montfitchet

Gilbert de Montfitchet

Richard Montfitchet

Roger Montfitchet

John Fitchet

William Fitchet

several generations missing

William Fitchet

John

Thomas

Roger

George

Thomas

Rev. James

Thomas

Samuel

Joseph

NORMAN OR French

Robert De GERNON - Came from France with
blood relative - William the Conqueror
1066

Given "Waysbury" - special gift - part of
He was BARON of STANSTEAD Montfichet
in Essex

Built a castle on a hill

Son - William de GERNON - changed to Montfichet
married MARGARET
daughter of Gilbert, 2nd Lord of
CLARE

Son - Gilbert^{de-} Montfichet

possible
mixed generation
unless these were younger
sons born at about
age 40 or 50

King William II Rufus
1087 - 1100

Henry I 1100 - 1135

Stephen 1135 - 1154

Henry II - 1153 - 1189

Richard 1189 - 1199

John 1199 - 1216

Son - Richard Montfichet

1215 - WRESTED CHARTER FROM King John
(MAGNA CARTA) OR 1216

One of 25 barons appointed to
rule the realm

1236 - Justice of the Royal Forest in
Essex

1242 High Sheriff of Essex & Gov. of Hertfordshire Castle

↓ 3 Sons

↓
3rd son Roger de Montfichet

(King Henry III
1216-1272)



Son John (changed name to Fitch leaving off T
+ Mont)
granted ARMORIAL bearings
in 1263

WAS in Fitch Castle of the North 1294



(King Edward I
1272-1307)

Son, William Fitch Widdington NORTHWEST Essex
1294
22nd year of Edward I

John Kell

He has gone and much we miss him

We are sad and will

But the Lord who gave him took him
To a better he should go

Margaret Gordon 7 years old

Alas; that lovely flower
which bloomed and shared my heart
fleeting comfort of an hour
How soon were called to part

Why should I

No more shall visit me
My soul will mourn ~~to~~ To Heaven
But there my child I'll see

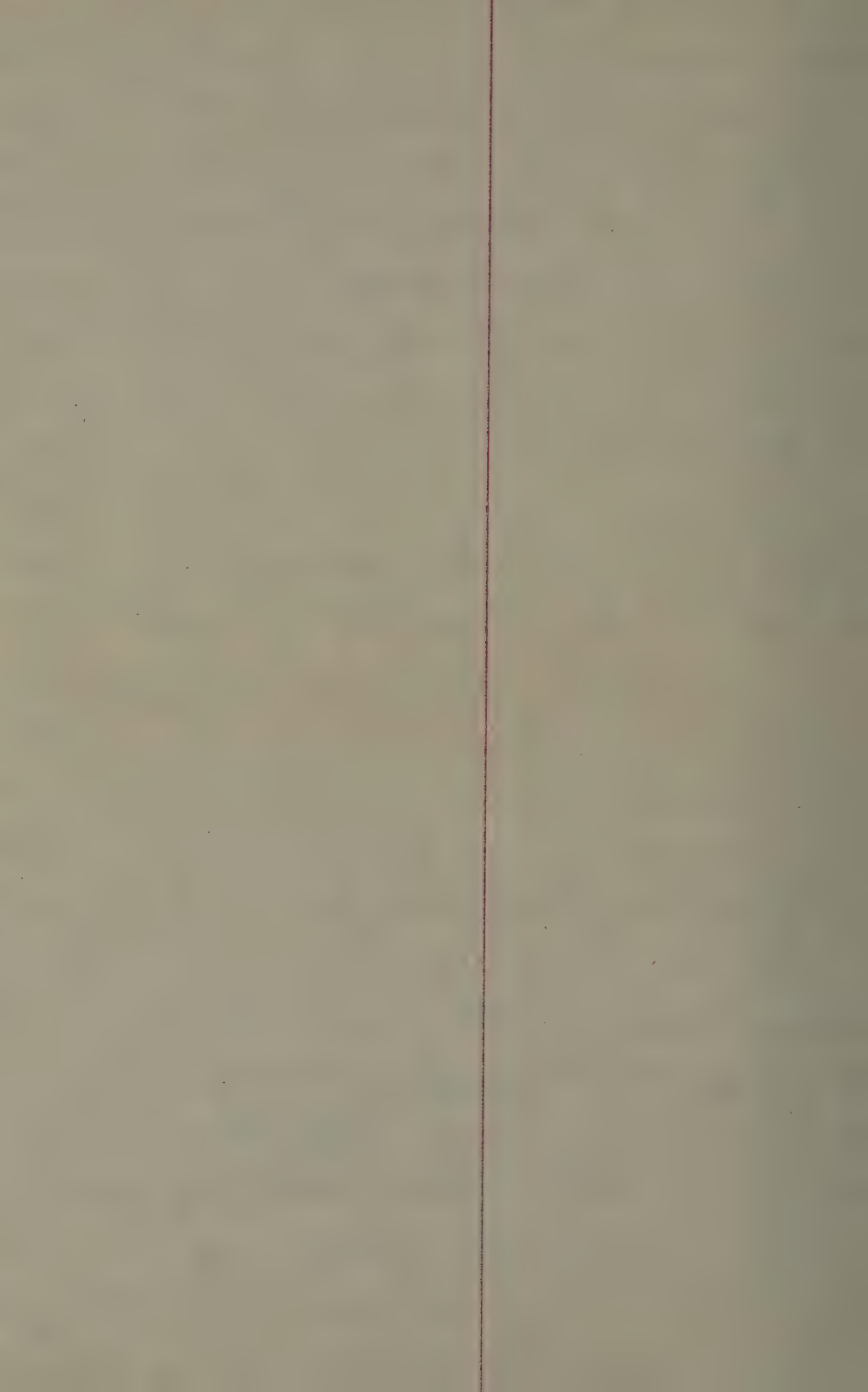
Dearest Husband Thou hast left

and thy loss we deeply feel

But tis God that hath bereft

He can all our sorrow heal

Spencer



William C. Hollopeter

Cynthia a Moore

✓ Milton R. - died at 15 yrs.

✓ Charles McPherson - 1862 to 19 married Nellie 1868-1924
(Lloyd + Daisy?) + Mary Carrington 1863-1919 ? Buried at Leo

Ophelia May

✓ Walter M.

✓ M;

Ellen Gerhardt

Rosa Belle 1874-1953

✓ Herbert Solomon 1932 Sp. Am. War

Last row

_____ Walter Belle

_____ Wm. C _____ Cynthia Charles

to Nathaniel Fitch

re made this 8th day of July, 1857, between Henry Hogue,
de bonis non of the estate of George DeLong, deceased,
Co., Indiana, of the first part, and Nathaniel Fitch,
county, of the second part, witnesseth, that on the 14th
1856, Samuel DeLong, administrator of said estate filed
in the court of common pleas of Allen County, Indiana,
the sale of the undivided interest that decedent held at
his death in the following described lands.

of the north west quarter, and the west half of the
quarter, except 9 acres off the east side of the last
acres off the north side of the east half of the south
all in section 4, Township 32, North of Range 12 East,
ty, Indiana, making Joel DeLong, Samuel DeLong, Alexander
DeLong, Mary Ann DeLong, Joseph DeLong, Rebecca DeLong,
DeLong, widow and heirs of said decedent, parties
Samuel DeLong being removed as administrator, said
was by said court appointed administrator de bonis non
e. Such proceedings were afterwards had in said court
th day of April, 1857, the administrator de bonis non
o sell the undivided two-thirds of said lands at public
ing advertised the same, the said Henry Hogue did on the
, 1857, proceed to sell said undivided two-thirds between
prescribed by law, at the court house door in said
he said Nathaniel Fitch having bid therefore the sum
nd being the highest and best bidder the same was struck
to him, and said administrator de bonis non having
sale to the court of common pleas of Allen County,
same was duly confirmed by said court in all things,
rator de bonis non ordered by said court to make said
eed for the said two-thirds of said land. Now Know Ye,
Hogue, administrator de bonis non of the estate of
, deceased, for and in consideration of the said sum
o me in hand paid by the said Nathaniel Fitch, and by
er of the said court, do hereby sell and convey unto
aniel Fitch and to his heirs and assigns forever, the
d two-thirds of all aforesaid land to have and to hold
mple a manner as the same was held by said George DeLong
f his death, free and clear of the claims of all heirs
George DeLong, or any person claiming under, by, or
or any of them.

ereof I have as such administrator de bonis non
ny hand and seal the day and year first aforesaid.

This Fitch property

*is adjoining the Samuel property
on the West side*

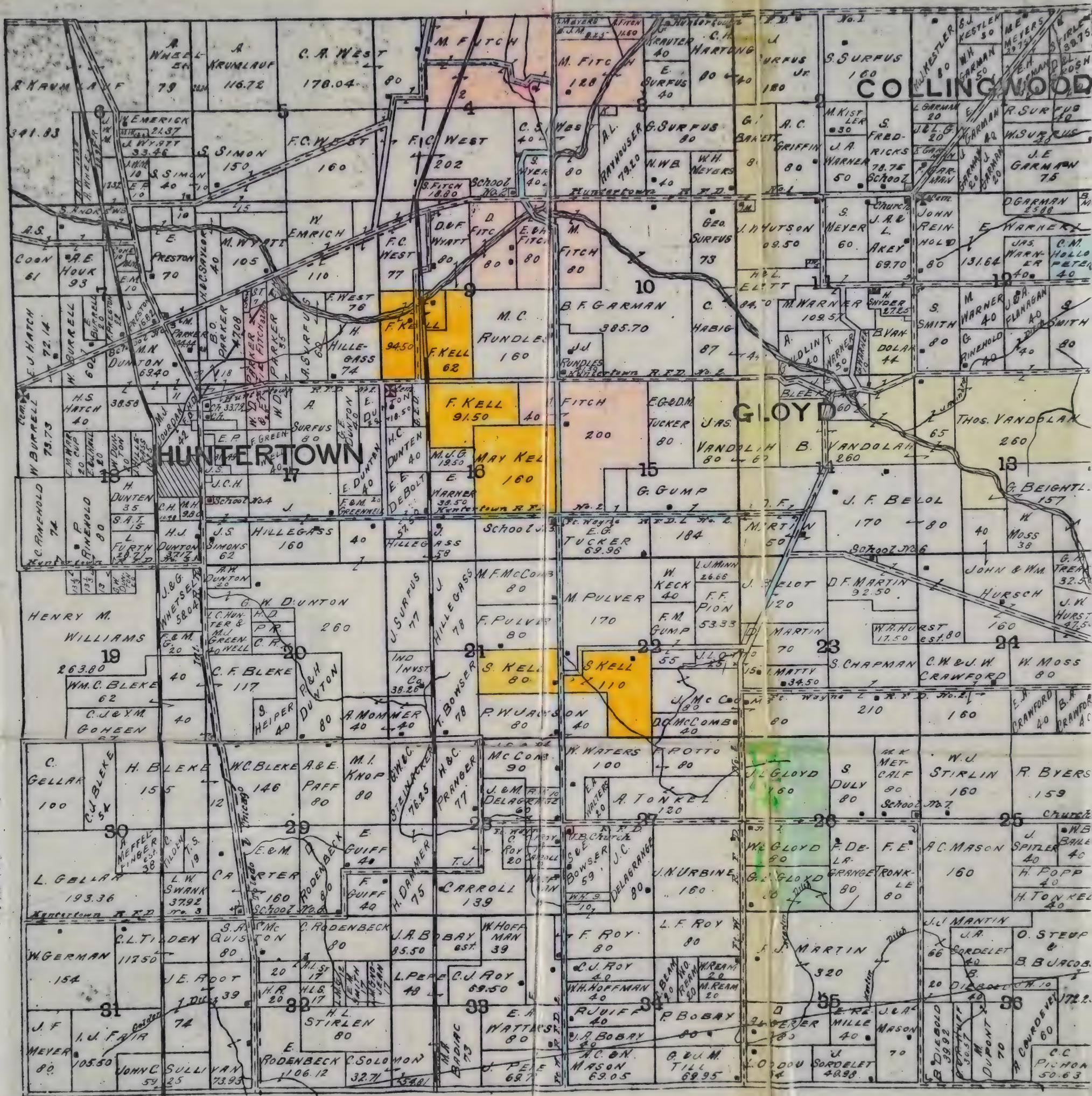
Capud

10-11-46-47

50-51



1907





Fitch Family History



The Picture to the left is that of Lindsell Parish Church in the county of Essex in England. Within this church are two stained glass windows and a brass dedicated to Fitches.

The objective of this site is to promote family history research in the name Fitch.

[Early history](#) of the Fitch family - condensed
[Fitch Archives](#)
[Links](#)

For comments and further information please contact me at the following email address



mike_fitch@lineone.net

Please Note, email addresses on this site are presented as graphics rather than text.

You Are Visitor No





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Early history of the Fitch family - condensed



Thomas and Agnes Fytche neè Alger
(16th century stained glass window in Lindsell Church)



William and Elizabeth Fytche
(16th century stained glass window in Lindsell Church)

There appear to have been two main branches of Fitches in England, the branch descended from Richard Fitch of Steeple Bumpstead who died in 1494 and the second branch descended from William Fitch of Wicken and Widdington who died circa 1466. In a very sweeping statement we can say that it is likely most of the Fitches in America today originate from William Fitch, whereas most Fitches in England today originate from Richard. It is generally accepted (in old times and new) that both lines descended from the same progenitor. The pictures above are from the American line.

John T. FITCH has researched the "William Fitch" line and has produced a number of splendid books about the subject. For further information go to his website on www.fitchfamily.com

This website concentrates mainly on the "Richard Fitch" line.

[Home](#)

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

(1066–1087), king of England

He was a very stern and violent man, so that no one dared do anything contrary to his will . . . Amongst other things the good security he made in this country is not to be forgotten.

(Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 1087)

THE son of Robert I 'the Magnificent', duke of Normandy, and Herlève, a tanner's daughter of Falaise, he was a shrewd, crude, and vigorous man who inspired both fear and respect. His main aim before 1066 was to assert his authority as duke of Normandy against disloyal nobles and his overlord, Henry I of France. After a turbulent minority (1035–42), William mastered his duchy by determination and skill, defeating rebels at Val-ès-Dunes, near Caen (1047). He sought external security by subduing neighbours or, as with his marriage to the count of Flanders's daughter Matilda (c.1052), winning their alliance. His English ambitions stemmed from personal and political links between the two countries, and Edward the Confessor seems to have promised him the succession (c.1051). He obtained papal approval for his invasion and held a papal banner at Hastings where, 'near the hoar-apple tree', he defeated Harold II. The submission of the rest of England, by ruthless harrying, castle-building, and confiscations, took three years; William suppressed risings in several areas and marched as far as Hexham and Chester (1068–9). He invaded Scotland (1072) and forced Malcolm III to do homage at Abernethy; in 1081 he visited St David's, receiving Welsh submissions on the way. William was no less concerned to maintain his authority in Normandy, where he spent long periods especially dealing with rebellion and French invasions. In England his rule was firm, disciplined, and equitable, and owed much to Archbishop Lanfranc, on whom he had relied in Church and State since 1063. The 'Domesday' survey (1086) recorded the resources of his kingdom,



KING WILLIAM I, bearded, crowned, holding a sceptre and seated on a cushioned bench. He is pictured receiving a copy of *The Deeds of the Norman Dukes* from its author, the monk William of Jumièges. This is from the chronicler Orderic Vitalis's autograph copy of his edition of the work.

and the oath of fealty at Salisbury (1086) from all important landholders stressed their obligations to him. Anglo-Norman writers were excellent publicists for him; William of Poitiers called him another Caesar, and even contemporary English writers gave him respect. William died in Normandy and was buried in his abbey foundation at Caen. Huguenots (1662) and Revolutionaries (1793) destroyed his tomb and scattered his bones.

England: to protect the Church and people, to offer justice to all, and to act with mercy. With people, clergy, and king as one, there then followed the most solemn act of the ceremony, the unction or anointing on head, chest, and hands. (Propriety, incidentally, demanded that the anointing should be confined to head and hands at Victoria's coronation in 1837!) This was usually performed by the archbishop of Canterbury, though in 1042 both archbishops officiated at Winchester, whilst at Harold's coronation (1066) it is uncertain which of them did

Fitch history :

According to MORANT'S History of County Essex

Robert de GERNON

came from France (Normandy) with
William the Conqueror 1066
who was a blood relative

Given "Waysbury" as a special donation
GERNON held it as a part of his barony
of which the head was
Stanstead-Montfichet in Essex
He built a castle on a hill which he
presented to his son

son

William de GERNON

William de GERNON
who dropped the name de GERNON
and assumed the name Montfichet.

marrried Margaret, daughter of Gilbert,
Second Lord of CLARE

son

Gilbert Montfichet

After Edward the Confessor, who was crowned at the Anglo-Saxon capital of Winchester, all English kings for the next 200 years (except Stephen) were crowned in Edward's new abbey church at Westminster. Ignoring Harold's brief rule, Edward was regarded as the last king of the Old English dynasty, and an association with the saintly monarch was important to usurping Normans; indeed, the Conqueror's coronation is reported to have been 'by the tomb of Edward the Confessor' on Christmas Day 1066:

And he promised Aldred [archbishop of York] on Christ's book and swore moreover (before Aldred would place the crown on his head) that he would rule all this people as well as the best of the kings before him, if they would be loyal to him. (Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 1066)

This, after all, was a novel experience for a Norman ruler, for no Norman duke had ever been anointed at his accession: girding with a sword (as was King Richard as duke of Normandy in 1189) or crowning with a circlet (which was provided for John's use by his mother ten years later) had been usual in the duchy.

On coronation day in the late eleventh century, the king, perhaps already wearing his crown, was led by a procession of clergy to the high altar. In the abbey acclamation by clergy and people preceded the taking of the triple oath, an oath which expressed the fundamental qualities and duties of kingship in

THE OLDEST ITEMS OF THE ENGLISH ROYAL REGALIA: the anointing spoon (of late twelfth-century date) and the ampulla in the form of a golden eagle (dating from the late fourteenth century); which presumably contained the holy oil alleged to have been revealed to Thomas Becket by the Virgin Mary. Both pieces were renovated in 1661 after the Restoration of Charles II.



EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

(1042–1066), king of the English

... it is our duty courageously to oppose the wicked and take good men as models, by enriching the churches of God, relieving those oppressed by wicked judges, and by judging equitably the powerful and the humble.

(Charter of Edward, 1063)

EDWARD is a shadowy figure. The elder son of Æthelred II and Queen Emma, he and his brother Alfred (d. 1036) lived in Normandy from 1013. The childless Harthacnut brought him to England (1041) perhaps to be his heir, despite a lack of military ability and reputation. When Edward was chosen king, he was acknowledged by Duke William of Normandy and by Germany and France. Apart from a kingly bearing and bushy beard, little is known of his appearance; the gentle saint of the *Life* (c.1066) conceals his poor judgement and childlike nature. At first, he sought to remove the threat from Denmark and Norway, though England remained in the grip of Cnut's earls, including Godwin of Wessex, whose daughter Edward reluctantly married (1045). Obsessively religious, he made contact with the reforming papacy and his finest monument is Westminster Abbey. But in favouring mostly Norman companions, Edward created a court of intrigue which produced the pivotal crisis of the reign (1050–2). The king fell out with Godwin, whose family was exiled (1051) while Queen Edith entered a nunnery. Godwin's return (1052) raised the succession question; failure to solve it

led to a war (1066) between Harold Godwinson and William of Normandy, with the Norwegian king in the background. When Duke William, Emma's great-nephew, visited England, he may have been designated Edward's heir. But in 1054, with Godwin's sons in control, Edward decided to make Edmund Ironside's son his heir. Edward the *ætheling's* death (1057) may have encouraged Harold to think of himself as a claimant; his influence was certainly paramount in the last decade of the king's life. Faced with the Northumbrian revolt (1065), when Harold visited Normandy he acknowledged William to be Edward's successor. As the king lay dying, he may have compounded uncertainty by naming Harold, who ignored his promise to William and precipitated the Norman invasion. Edward was buried in his new abbey at Westminster, and his tomb was venerated from the early twelfth century. He was canonized (1161) and his body translated three times (1163, 1269, 1557). The *Life* and posthumous cult bestowed on Edward the reputation of a saintly and beneficent king, the last of his line.

THE CROWNED EDWARD THE CONFESSOR ON HIS DEATH-BED, in the presence of a cleric, two liegemen, and two ladies (one perhaps Queen Edith). In this double scene from the Bayeux Tapestry, the shrouded corpse beneath is laid out, with the attendant cleric.



With rather less conviction, it can be said that in Scotland, too, the struggles that took place in the eleventh century between rival claimants to the Scottish crown, and the more fundamental confrontation between the Anglicized south and the Scottish north which these dynastic struggles partly reflect, shaped a kingship that stressed the powers and authority of the Scottish kings. Even in Ireland and Wales, the successful campaigns of one or two great dynasties to impose an (albeit temporary) hegemony over the others seem to have edged the concept of 'high kingship' towards a broader overall regal authority.

Paradoxically, the strains of military conquest and the growing influence of the English kingdom on other kingdoms in the British Isles could have a contrary effect. Moreover, a more precise definition of kingly powers made some people aware of the limitations of these powers, whether such limitations were imposed by the kings' own subjects or by external authorities such as the pope and neighbouring monarchs. And the nobility, whom conquering kings enlisted in their victorious enterprises—whether it be Cnut or William I in England, or Anglicized kings in Scotland, or noble conquerors of the Welsh and Irish marches—were a feudal class that had a role in war, society, and government which kings could hardly ignore, no matter how powerful they felt themselves to be. It is unhelpful to designate this period as 'the age of feudal kingship', but this dependence of kings on their nobility is a large and important factor that modified the authoritarianism of kingship in these centuries.

The role of kings as military leaders and defenders of their kingdoms was bound to be one of the most prominent characteristics of kingship in an age when Scandinavian and, then, French kings subdued the Anglo-Saxon kingdom in quite lightning fashion. Henry I may have relished the role of a strategic commander more than that of a general in the field, but all kings of England could be found at the head of their armies, in England itself or in the transmarine dominions which they strove to hold together around the Baltic Sea or in France. William Rufus campaigned as vigorously against the Scots as did Henry II in Ireland, and—the greatest warrior of all—Richard the Lion-heart was a famous crusader in the Holy Land. Nor could the Scottish kings afford to leave the saddle for long, and ambitious Welsh and Irish kings campaigned long and hard, and wherever it was necessary, in order to crush the resistance of their rivals. An early thirteenth-century Welsh poet relished, next only to godliness, 'mead and the feastings of a victorious ruler, a long bright summer, a well-fed horse in April, the play of spears and the waving of banners'. As Stephen and King John could unhappily testify, the king who failed in battle, or whose military capabilities remained unproven, was likely to fail as a king.

Yet the time was long past when kings could rely solely on their prowess and success in arms in order to maintain and justify their kingship. Kings in the British Isles were Christian kings, and whilst this quality consolidated and enhanced

HAROLD II

(1066), king of the English

[He] met little quiet as long as he ruled the realm.

(Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 1066)

THE eldest son of Godwin, earl of Wessex, there was no royal blood in Harold's veins. Opportunity, designation by Edward the Confessor, and the absence of a suitable candidate from the royal house justified his seizure of the throne when Edward died (5 January 1066). His earlier career was that of a great nobleman and successful warrior, an indispensable adjunct to the political and territorial mastery of his father. He was earl of East Anglia (c.1044) and led the army that forced Edward to reinstate his family (1052). He succeeded his father as earl of Wessex (1053) and his brothers were earls by 1057. Their only rival was the family of Leofric of Mercia, supported by the Welsh; both were defeated by Harold and his brother Tostig, earl of Northumbria (1063). His failure to support Tostig when Northumbria revolted (1065) turned his brother into a bitter enemy. When the succession problem became immediate, Harold had himself hastily crowned (6 January). It is doubtful if he had time in his short reign to think of anything but his own security. He was opposed by William of Nor-

mandy, whose accession he had sworn to accept, and by Harold Hardrada, king of Norway, and Tostig. Harold swiftly mobilized an army and fleet against William, but instead had to deal with Tostig's raids. The invasion of Tostig and Hardrada forced him to divert his army to defeat them at Stamford Bridge (25 September). Some men had been dismissed through lack of supplies, and William landed unopposed at Pevensey (28 September). After a 250-mile march from the north, Harold's army was depleted, weary, and bloodied, William's fresh and intact. Victory at Hastings (14 October) went to heavily armed cavalry supported by infantry and archers, who overcame the dismounted English unsupported by archers, who were induced by a feigned flight to desert their defensive position. Harold, struck in the eye and battered by Norman knights, according to the Bayeux Tapestry, and two of his brothers lay dead at the end of the day's fighting.

THE ENTHRONED, CROWNED, AND MOUSTACHED KING HAROLD II, holding a palm (or sceptre) and an orb. An attendant offers him the sword, and Stigand, the schismatic archbishop of Canterbury, stands to one side. The scene is from the Bayeux Tapestry.





THE CORONATION OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR on Easter Day 1043. This picture, from a mid-thirteenth-century history of Edward as a saint, shows the enthroned king being crowned at the Anglo-Saxon capital of Winchester by Archbishop Eadsige of Canterbury and Archbishop Ælfric of York, who had both been appointed by Cnut the Dane. Eadsige concludes the investment of the king with the royal regalia by handing him the rod of equity and virtue.

king until he was crowned. Indeed, the uncrowned Matilda used the style 'lady of the English', and Richard I and John, in the weeks between their election and their coronation, were usually designated 'lord' rather than king. And until Edward I's accession in 1272 (when the king was abroad on crusade, where he remained until 1274), a reign was considered to begin only at the solemn and formal crowning. Not that in the interval government in practice ceased and people did not know who their king was; but only with the crowning was God's endorsement unmistakable and royal acts given cast-iron authority.

Confessor's words) 'king of the English by the gift of God' or (as on William Rufus's great seal) more simply as 'by the grace of God', a sublime phrase still used by Queen Elizabeth II. The swearing of homage by his tenants-in-chief and of fealty by other subjects acknowledged that, since the Norman Conquest, an English king was the feudal suzerain of all England and had its land ultimately at his disposal. He was now different from all other men: in the words of the twelfth-century law-book associated with the name of the great justice Ranulf Glanville, 'the lord king can have no equal, much less a superior'.

If the regular crown-wearings that William the Conqueror introduced—usually at the religious festivities of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, and frequently at Gloucester, Winchester, and Westminster—were designed to remind as many of his conquered people as could see or hear him that he was their duly crowned and anointed king, they also served to re-emphasize the importance of the coronation and, by their pageantry and ritual, popularized its spiritual and secular symbolism. In the middle of the civil war, in 1147, Stephen held an extraordinary, solemn crown-wearing at Lincoln which amounted to a political declaration, for Lincoln Castle had been held until recently in Matilda's interest:

... King Stephen wore his crown during Christmas at Lincoln, which no King, because of some superstition, had ever ventured to do before. This showed his great resolution and how little importance he attached to such superstitions. (Henry of Huntingdon, *History of the English*)

Crown-wearings were held until at least the fifteenth century, even if the movements of kings and their growing responsibilities made them rather less regular.

The coronation oath offers but a brief and simple insight into the tasks of kingship, and we must recognize that it represents a formal, ideal, and, most probably, a clerical view of the king's obligations and duties. Yet the speed with which new kings sought their crowning and anointing, especially at times of dynastic uncertainty, suggests that the accompanying oath and its promises were of awesome significance as the consummation of a king's accession and the moral guidelines of his rule. Many coronations—though perhaps not all—were associated with much more elaborate promises couched in charter form from Henry I's reign onwards. These largely reiterated how earlier kings had approached their duties, with an assurance that the newly crowned king would do likewise. Edward the Confessor, in a charter of 1063, revealed his conception of his obligations, descanting on the triple oath he had sworn all of twenty years before:

I, Edward, through the contribution of divine providence, by which all things are governed, appointed king and defender of the English bounds, invoke God with unsleeping mind not only that I may be famed for my royal protection, but also that,

WILLIAM II RUFUS

(1087–1100), king of England

He was very strong and fierce to his country and his men and to all his neighbours, and very terrible. And because of the counsels of wicked men, which were always agreeable to him, and because of his avarice, he was always harassing this nation with military service and excessive taxes, for in his days all justice was in abeyance.

(Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 1100)

WILLIAM's bad press is mainly due to hostile monastic writers and denigration by his younger brother, Henry I. He was his father's favourite son, strong, thickset, and ruddy. But his character is a puzzle: he seems ebullient, self-confident, intelligent, and outspoken—even blasphemous—but in extending the Conqueror's policies and methods he appeared to many oppressive and brutal. William was the Conqueror's choice to inherit England (1087), but his elder brother Robert inherited Normandy. He proved single-minded in securing his grip not only on the kingdom but also on the duchy, which became his when Robert went on crusade (1096). Despite friction with Archbishop Anselm (from 1093), he did not surrender control of the Church. William made greater headway than his father in securing his realm's frontiers: three Scottish kings swore homage to him and William took royal power to the far north of England. He helped make Westminster the administrative centre of the kingdom and added a great hall to the Confessor's palace. With wide support from nobles, bishops, and talented agents, he died a well-established king, though unmarried and childless. In 1100 he was shot, probably accidentally, while hunting in the New Forest and was buried in Winchester Cathedral.



WILLIAM RUFUS, as represented on a stone capital, now lost but originally probably in an arcade in the cloister of Westminster Abbey which was built during his reign. In this engraving of the 1830s, the king is shown seated but uncrowned, holding a parchment roll and flanked by the abbot of Westminster and one of the monks. He can hardly have been as repugnant to the Church as is often suggested.

high altar and handed it to the archbishop of Canterbury for the actual crowning. It is not known whether this was novel or caused any eyebrows to be raised, but if he (like his predecessors) had proceeded crowned to the abbey, it would seem not unnatural that an anointed king should deliver his own crown to the Church's representative for the actual crowning.

Following the blessing on the day's proceedings and on the crowned king, those present—often including foreign envoys—as appropriate either greeted the new king or swore homage to him as a mark of feudal subordination. Thereafter, kings could describe themselves in their charters as (to use the

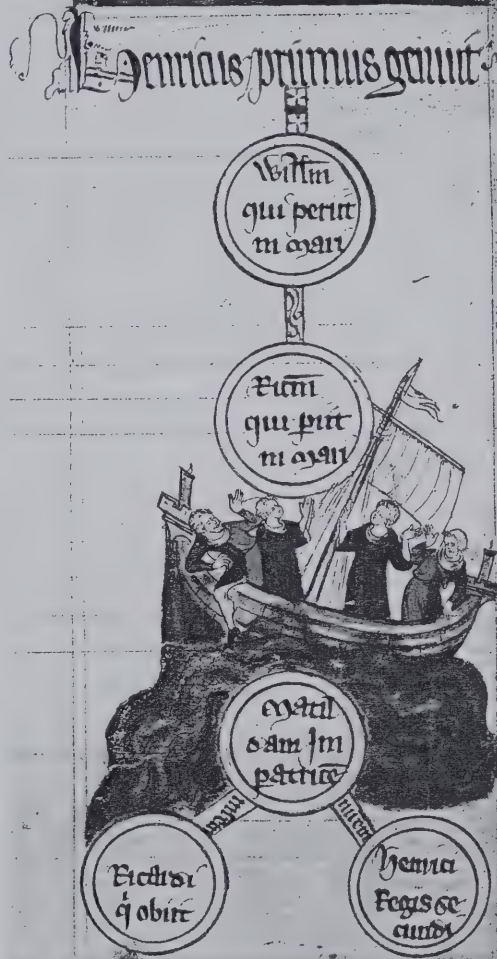
HENRY I

(1100–1135), King of England

... to him the kingdom seemed to pertain as of right since he was the only one of William's sons who was born when his father was a king. He was early instructed in the liberal arts, and so throughout imbibed the sweets of learning that no warlike disturbance and no pressure of business could erase them from his noble mind ... his learning ... though obtained by snatches, assisted him much in the science of government

(William of Malmesbury, *The Deeds of the Kings of the English*)

THOUGH brought up in England, like his father, William I, and his brother, Henry regarded Normandy as equally important. Strong and stocky, later tending to fat, with black hair and a cheerful disposition, he was cruel, lustful, avaricious, and a stern judge. Well educated, even studious, by the thirteenth century he was known as 'clerk'. Largely landless in his youth, when Rufus was killed (1100), he made straight for Winchester and after a difficult moment was declared rightful king by the witan. Henry shrewdly disowned the harsher aspects of his brother's rule, and his 'coronation charter' offered reconciliation, as did the return of the exiled Archbishop Anselm. But this was mostly propaganda, for he continued his brother's policies and methods, extending them to the point of administrative innovation. A restless monarch, he spent much time in Normandy, which he eventually (1106) seized from his brother Robert, whom he imprisoned for life. He was a decisive and energetic ruler, and determined to ensure security for both his dominions: he established peaceful relations with Scotland (partly by his marriage to Matilda, daughter of Malcolm Canmore), and in Wales asserted his power over Welsh kings on a broad front. He set great store by marriage diplomacy. Henry's imagination is apparent in government: he centralized the administration of England and Normandy in the royal court and patronized officials and families who owed all to him. Henry had one legitimate son, William, whose drowning in the White Ship (1120) posed a succession problem. Henry sent (1126) for his only legitimate daughter, Matilda, widow of the German emperor who was widely accepted as his successor; she married Geoffrey, son of the count of Anjou (1128). When Henry died, after eating too many lampreys, civil war broke out between Matilda and his nephew Stephen. Henry's achievements stood squarely on those of William I and William Rufus, taking their policies to a new level. The fatal flaw was his family.



KING HENRY I, crowned and seated on a cushioned bench, is shown in this fifteenth-century pedigree-chronicle lamenting the wreck of the White Ship, in which his only legitimate son William perished, along with one of his bastard children, Richard. This left Henry's only daughter Matilda, 'the Empress', as the king's heir.

This was rather less true in England where, as far as the kingship was concerned, an heir's suitability and adulthood entered into the discussion. It was still accepted that all male members of the royal family (the *æthelings*) had a claim to the patrimony which it would be wise for a new king to satisfy. Moreover, when Danish, Norman, and Angevin kings had several inheritances in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the temptation to endow each surviving son with one or more of them made jealousies and disputes more likely. The Anglo-Norman and Angevin dominions presented peculiar problems, because of the determination of almost all kings of England to preserve the unity of their disparate inheritances. Thus, when a king died or became incapacitated, there was an expectation—even stronger than in tenth-century England—that conflicting interests would come to the surface and disrupt the peace, as rivals competed for inheritances or tried to exclude their kinsmen from power. The result was a series of partitions and a number of succession wars that occupied much of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Cnut had thought to partition his dominions at his death in 1035, but his plan for Harthacnut to rule in England and Harold in Denmark and Norway went awry immediately for personal and fortuitous reasons. In 1066 the throne was challenged by an English earl, Harold Godwinson, who had no royal blood to speak of in his veins, and then by a foreign duke who was scarcely better endowed. In the prevailing uncertainty, each saw the main chance and seized it, claiming the Confessor's blessing. Such *coups* were never to happen again in English history. William of Poitiers, writing in about 1071, gave the Conqueror's genealogical tree a vigorous shake in order to produce a sound hereditary claim for him; but his tortuous prose betrays a basic uncertainty:

This land he has gained as the legal heir with the confirmation of the oaths of the English. He took possession of his inheritance by battle, and he was crowned at last with the consent of the English or at least at the desire of their magnates. And if it be asked what was his hereditary title, let it be answered that a close kinship existed between King Edward and the son of Duke Robert whose paternal aunt, Emma, was the sister of Duke Richard II, the daughter of Duke Richard I and the mother of King Edward himself . . . (*The Deeds of William, duke of the Normans and King of the English*)

The quarrels between William the Conqueror's three sons, Robert Curthose, William Rufus, and Henry, were mirrored later by the ugly disputes between Henry II's sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John; while in between, civil war blighted England because Henry I's only legitimate son was drowned (1120) before his father died, and Henry's daughter Matilda and his nephew Stephen struggled for a crown that had never previously been worn by a woman. This war was ended by a treaty that could not conceal the fact that Stephen accepted Matilda's son Henry as his successor only by virtue of brute force and cruel luck.

Rufus, who lived until he was forty-four, was a dissolute (and possibly bisexual) bachelor. But in general, the choice of a wife and queen was of cardinal importance both personally and publicly to almost every king.

It had not been unknown in the past for English kings to marry foreigners, but after 1016 it inevitably became a habit. This, in turn, accentuated the differences of birth, speech, and sentiment between especially the Norman and Angevin kings and their subjects. Cnut married Æthelred II's queen, Emma of Normandy, presumably for political reasons connected with his desire to forge an alliance with the Normans and to consolidate his hold on England. After Hastings, no reigning king of England married an Englishwoman until the mid-fifteenth century, and only King John succeeded to the throne with an English-born wife already in his bed—Isabella of Gloucester, whom he had wedded long before. (Henry Bolingbroke's English wife died several years before he seized the crown in 1399.) Setting aside more personal considerations which, in the case of kings, may not often have been allowed to intrude in the planning of royal marriages, the need for territorial security and alliances with other rulers, or, at other times, dynastic and territorial ambitions—these were the commoner motives for matrimony. It is in this context that Cnut's marriage with Emma should be placed, the Confessor's unenthusiastic marriage with Edith Godwinson, King John's with his second wife, Isabella of Angoulême, and Henry III's with Eleanor of Provence. Henry I's marriage to Matilda of Scotland in 1100 was later regarded as being of unusual significance for, as the daughter of Malcolm III's queen, Margaret of England, she was a direct descendant of West Saxon kings. Although this particular link may not have meant a great deal to Henry at the time of his wedding, it was emphasized by Ailred of Rievaulx when he came to



THE TOMB-EFFIGY OF ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE (d. 1204), queen of Henry II, at Fontevrault Abbey, which Eleanor patronized. It is a rare effigy that depicts its subject living, in Eleanor's case reading a book, which reflects her cultured interests.

Gilbert Montfichet

STEPHEN

(1135–1154), king of England, and

MATILDA

(d. 1167), lady of the English

... a man of less judgement than energy, an active soldier, of remarkable spirit in difficult undertakings, lenient to his enemies and easily placated, courteous to all. Though you admired his kindness in making promises, you doubted the truth of his words and the reliability of what he promised.

(William of Malmesbury, *New History*)

She, with a grim look, her forehead wrinkled into a frown, every trace of a woman's gentleness removed from her face, blazed into unbearable fury, saying that many times the people of London had made very large contributions to the king...

(*The Deeds of Stephen*)

THIRD son of Stephen, count of Blois and Chartres, and Adela, the Conqueror's daughter, Stephen was charming and attractive, but did not inspire trust and to many he seemed sly. Henry I married him (1125) to his queen's niece, heiress of Boulogne. Matilda was already married (1110) to Henry V, emperor of Germany, where she remained until his death (1125). In 1126 Stephen led the nobles in acknowledging her as King Henry's successor. Her marriage to Geoffrey of Anjou (1128) was troubled and she returned to England in 1131. Yet in 1135 Stephen was widely preferred in England and Normandy to Matilda as Henry I's successor. A destructive civil war followed which neither was able to win. Stephen lacked ruthlessness and failed to inspire loyalty. Matilda, though supported by David I of Scotland and Robert, earl of Gloucester, was not decisive, and her regime in the areas she controlled (from 1139) was harsh. Stephen was captured at Lincoln (1141) and declared deposed, but soon after Earl Robert was taken and exchanged for the king, who was recrowned at Canterbury. Matilda eventually (1148) retired to Normandy which her husband had won (1144), and her eldest son Henry upheld her cause in England. Time ran out for Stephen: he became sick; his valiant wife



KING STEPHEN THE HUNTSMAN, crowned and seated on an elaborate bench. He wears a falconer's gloves and is holding a falcon. The king was a convivial and chivalric man who enjoyed hunting.

died (1151) and so did his son and heir Eustace (1153). Henry forced him to a treaty (1153), whereby Stephen would remain king for life and accept Henry as his heir. Stephen died at Dover and was buried with his wife and son at Faversham Abbey, which he founded. Matilda died at Rouen (1167) and was buried at Bec Abbey; her coffin, rediscovered in 1846, was reinterred in Rouen Cathedral. She had some influence on her son as king of England, and her tomb inscription is said to have run: 'Here lies Henry's daughter, wife and mother; great by birth—greater by marriage—but greatest by motherhood.'

any case, the unsettled life of a marauding soldier may not have been particularly conducive to early matrimony. It is generally agreed that Edward the Confessor was not uxorious by nature (he produced no children, legitimate or illegitimate, and packed his wife off to a nunnery when opportunity allowed), whilst William

HENRY II

(1153–1189), king of England

... a man of reddish, freckled complexion with a large round head, grey eyes which glowed fiercely and grew blood-shot in anger, a fiery countenance and a harsh, cracked voice. His neck was somewhat thrust forward from his shoulders, his chest broad and square, his arms strong and powerful. His frame was stocky with a pronounced tendency to corpulence ... he was a prince of great eloquence and, what is remarkable in these days, polished in letters.

(Gerald of Wales, *The Conquest of Ireland*)

ELDEST son of Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou, he ruled the largest territorial dominion of his age. Imaginative, energetic, and commanding, with an alert and capacious mind trained in Normandy, Anjou, and England, he determined never to relax his grip on Church or State. He was designated Henry I's ultimate successor (1133) and took part in the civil war alongside David I, who knighted him (1149); he was invested with Normandy by his father (1150) and inherited the Angevin lands when Geoffrey died (1151). He married the vivacious and talented Eleanor, whose inheritance of Aquitaine made him the greatest French noble; they had nine children in thirteen years. King Stephen adopted Henry as his son and heir (1153) and in 1154 he succeeded to the English throne. Henry issued a charter of liberties and set about restoring royal authority, skilfully renovating the financial, military, and judicial machinery of government. He safeguarded his French fiefs by diplomatic marriages and by dominating neighbouring provinces, though he recoiled from confronting his overlord, Louis VII. He forced Malcolm IV to return the northern counties, and claimed homage from Malcolm, Welsh kings (1157), and native kings and English conquerors in Ireland (1171). His chief adviser was Thomas Becket, but when Becket became archbishop of Canterbury (1162), his views on Church and State led to a collision that damaged Henry at home and abroad; the dispute culminated in Becket's murder (1170) and a papal interdict on England. Henry's greatest problem later was his quarrelsome wife and sons and their territorial ambitions (from 1173), though his autocratic rule also caused unrest. The death of his sons Henry (1183) and



THE TOMB-EFFIGY OF KING HENRY II at Fontevrault Abbey. It probably dates from the late twelfth century and may have an element of portraiture about it. The king is shown robed and crowned as he was carried to his burial.

Geoffrey (1186) did not resolve matters, for Richard and John were still in revolt when Henry died at Chinon; he was buried at Fontevrault. An unattractive figure, he had a genius for government, developed the royal bureaucracy, and established the supremacy of common law under royal control.

Gilbert Montfitchet



son Richard Montfitchet

- 1225 (or 1215?) Helped wrest charter
from King John (Magna Carta)
to King John

overseas commitments made it essential that an alternative method of asserting the royal authority in the provinces of the realm should be devised. Cnut resorted to government by viceroy, by great earls who between them had responsibility for four new earldoms, one of which was Wessex itself; in the social and administrative vocabulary of England, the Scandinavian 'earl' soon replaced the Anglo-Saxon 'thegn'. These largely autonomous earldoms survived through Edward the Confessor's reign into that of the Conqueror. There were, of course, dangers in devolving royal powers in the absence of the king to dominant earls such as Godwin of Wessex who, as events showed in the Confessor's reign, might act as if they were kings themselves; they quarrelled with other earls and undermined the royal authority which they were charged to uphold. It was one of William the Conqueror's achievements to break the hegemony of these regional viceroys and begin to reassert regal authority throughout the realm. Of course, the Normans were themselves forced to delegate authority to some degree, but they did so in a different way.

The rulers of Normandy before 1066 were itinerant, sure enough, and they and the ducal court were thereby able to organize and supervise the duchy's government, even though some of the duke's kinsmen ruled the frontierland as counts. They followed the same habits of government in England, though adapted to suit the greater distances involved. The sheer determination of the conquerors, who had more limited territorial responsibilities than Cnut, enabled William I and his sons to achieve what some historians see as a surprising degree of integration of their two dominions, England and Normandy. It is possible to visualize an Anglo-Norman monarchy, with the itinerant king at its head and practical authority delegated to governmental structures that allowed provincial administration to evolve without sacrificing central control, and all this despite turmoil in England and Normandy, and persistent threats from outside. A single chancellor for the Anglo-Norman 'realm' dealt with business relating to both territories, and historians admire the strength of this monarchy. After Henry I had permanently recovered Normandy (1106), a scheme of 'viceroys' was devised so that the duchy could be effectively ruled even when the king was in England. It may have been prefigured towards the end of William Rufus's reign when (1096) he obtained Normandy in pawn from his elder brother Robert; but it was Henry's design that gave Normandy an itinerant vice-regal court which acted on the king's behalf. When Henry himself travelled to Normandy, as he regularly did, this court was simply absorbed into his entourage, whilst he left in England a group of advisers who could wield power alongside his queen or his young son William. These vice-regal courts *in absentia* had no formal title: they were simply the itinerant king's *alter ego*, devised to meet the practical problem of how a cross-Channel dominion could be ruled by a personal monarchy.

Most historians see the Angevin dominions as far less tightly organized,

RICHARD I 'THE LION-HEART'

(1189–1199), king of England

At about this time [1194] the king of England, imposing certain measures to improve the royal finances, announced that knights should come together from all over England to try out their strength in tournaments, thinking perhaps that if he should declare war on the Saracens or his neighbours, or if outsiders presumptuously invaded the kingdom, he would find them more vigorous, better trained and readier for warfare.

(Ralph of Diceto, *Images of History*)

THIRD son of Henry II and Queen Eleanor, Richard spent less time in England than any of his predecessors (1189–90, 1194) and over a year in captivity in Germany (1193–4). A brave, cultivated but cruel and tempestuous man, dogged by ill health, few English kings have been the subject of so many heroic legends. He was regarded as Eleanor's heir, schooled in the affairs of Aquitaine of which he was made duke (1168); his military skills were developed in struggles with his father and brothers (1173–89). Henry II acknowledged him (1189) as his heir and agreed to his marriage with Alice, sister of Philip II of France. Soon after his crowning, Richard resolved to fulfil his crusading vow and went to great lengths to raise resources. He bound his brother John not to enter England while he was away and declared his nephew Arthur his heir (1190); John later revolted (1193). Richard and Philip agreed on the mutual defence of their dominions and left for the Holy Land. On the way, Richard made conquests in Sicily and Cyprus, where he married Berengaria, the king of Navarre's daughter, instead of Alice. After his victory over Saladin, the capture of Acre, and the treaty of Jaffa (1192), Richard returned to Europe. He fell into the clutches of the German emperor who forced him to do homage for England and pay a large ransom. Richard eventually reached England to find that John had sworn homage to Philip for Richard's French lands and that Philip had invaded Normandy. Recrowned at Westminster (1194), he forcefully waged war on Philip,



THE TOMB-EFFIGY OF KING RICHARD I at Fontevrault Abbey. It may date from soon after the king's death (1199) and the thin, bearded face and formal dress may represent his appearance at his burial.

but was killed at Chalus-Chabrol, near Limoges; he was buried at Fontevrault, his heart at Rouen. England occupied a minor part of his mind and he left its rule to others.

inherited, too, a tradition of controlling and manipulating the coinage. Although Edward the Confessor abolished the heregeld (1051), the growing wealth of England in the eleventh century meant that the king was not significantly impoverished. The Treasury at Winchester continued to collect and store the royal revenues under the Normans. And Henry I used his control of the coinage

experience. By the end of the twelfth century, England had the most sophisticated and effective monarchy in Europe. It was served by a body of professional servants who moved easily between shire, court, and Westminster at the king's command: they may pardonably be described as a royal bureaucracy.



THE GREAT SEAL OF KING STEPHEN, adopted after 1139 and used for the rest of the reign. The obverse shows the king enthroned, with a long sword in his right hand, an orb in his left; the legend reads 'Stephen by the grace of God king of the English'. The reverse shows the king mounted, wearing a pointed helmet and carrying a lance; the legend reads 'Stephen by the grace of God duke of the Normans'.

Such a transformation would not have been possible without the substantial resources at the disposal of the English monarchy. The preface to the monumental description of the workings of the king's Exchequer, which was written in the late 1170s in the form of a dialogue between two Exchequer officials, puts it well:

... the abundance of resources, or the lack of them, exalts or humbles the power of princes. For those who are lacking in them become a prey to their enemies, while those who are well supplied with them despoil their foes ... The glory of princes consists in mighty deeds both in peace and war, but it excels in those where, in return for an earthly outlay, there follows an eternal and blessed reward.

Cnut had inherited a system of taxation (the geld) which was assessed locally on property; in addition, the heregeld was designed specifically to meet the king's military needs. He soon realized his good fortune, and in 1018 raised £72,000 (and £10,500 more from London) to pay off his invasion army and fleet. Cnut

burial place of a successful dynasty that had vied with others for the 'high kingship' of Ireland.

If the administrative and governmental structures of the Anglo-Norman monarchy influenced Ireland, they did so not through the Irish monarchies, but as a result of the establishment of a foreign colony at the beginning of the thirteenth century. During King John's reign, several features of English government were exported to Ireland in a limited context. John introduced English law and custom, but only for English settlers and those Irish who were specifically granted English law by charter. The jury system was introduced, sheriffs were appointed, and a coinage for English Ireland was minted. Such developments, which had been welcomed in Scotland, at least by some, were associated with foreign invasion and oppression in Ireland; the psychology of 'two nations' was taking root and has had a long history. This was Irishmen's first taste of settled, permanent, centralized administration, based in Dublin Castle which John built, not as an Irish monarch but as a colonial governor. Under such pressures, even the title of king (or *rí*) in Ireland eventually fell into disuse—as had happened in Wales already. There is an irony here, for Henry II had the ambitious design of making his youngest son king of Ireland, to laud it over Irish kings and English nobles alike. But by the time papal sanction and a crown of peacock feathers and gold had arrived from Rome (1185), English armies had been defeated in Ireland and fourteen years later John became king of England and henceforth let the matter rest.

By the thirteenth century, then, monarchical developments had made rapid and far-reaching strides in England, and to some extent they were being emulated in Scotland. But they touched but lightly the ailing monarchies of Wales and Ireland. There monarchy died: English political and governmental structures were imposed piecemeal by conquerors and colonists, yet with insufficient strength to create a vigorous new monarchy in place of the indigenous old.

Richard Montfitchet

1225 (or 1215) wrested charter from King John
Magna Carta

One of 25 barons appointed to rule the realm

JOHN

(1199–1216), king of England

He was indeed a great prince but less than successful; like Marius he met with both kinds of luck. He was generous and liberal to outsiders but a despoiler of the inhabitants. Since he trusted more in foreigners than in them, he had been abandoned before the end by his people, and in his own end he was little mourned.

(The Barnwell Chronicle)

NOTORIOUSLY cruel, suspicious, untrustworthy, and violent, John's reputation is not salvaged by an alleged constructive interest in administration or by assertions that contemporary writers were monks who resented his treatment of the Church. The youngest son of Henry II and Queen Eleanor, he 'lacked land' until made king of Ireland (1177), but his Irish expedition (1185–6) failed. Henry's plan (1183) to give him Aquitaine led to war with his brother Richard, and when Henry died (1189) John was also at war with the king. Richard treated him generously, but he intrigued in Richard's absence on crusade; he was reconciled when Richard returned and on his death-bed Richard made him his heir (1199). As king he was calculating and insensitive, and he made a number of enemies, English as well as French and papal. Nobles and clergy resisted his demands for resources to protect his French lands;

allies were offended by his marriage to Isabella of Angoulême and his murder of his nephew, Arthur of Brittany; and by 1204 all were angry at his military ineffectiveness in losing Normandy and Anjou (hence the name 'Softsword'). He quarrelled with the new archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton (from 1206), and so alienated the pope that England was laid under interdict (1208–13) and John excommunicated (1209). His success in forcing the submission of William the Lion, Welsh princes, and English colonists in Ireland cost money, which John raised by exploitation of clergy, nobles, and Jews, and caused resentment. His submission of the kingdom to the pope (1213) was a stroke of genius by a desperate man faced with growing opposition. He promised justice and Henry I's customs, while plotting revenge on his enemies. When expeditions to Poitou and in aid of the German emperor against Philip II (1214) proved disastrous, John's determination to defy his critics led to civil war (1215); at Runnymede he was forced to seal Magna Carta, guaranteeing justice and good government. His plans to exact further revenge drove some nobles to renounce their allegiance and choose Philip II's son, Louis, as king (1216). During a harsh campaign against his rebels, he died at Newark after consuming peaches and beer; he was buried, as requested, in Worcester Cathedral.



THE TOMB-EFFIGY OF KING JOHN in Worcester Cathedral. The king is flanked by smaller figures of St Oswald and St Wulfstan, whom John admired. The king asked to be buried at Worcester, and is the only English king to be so.

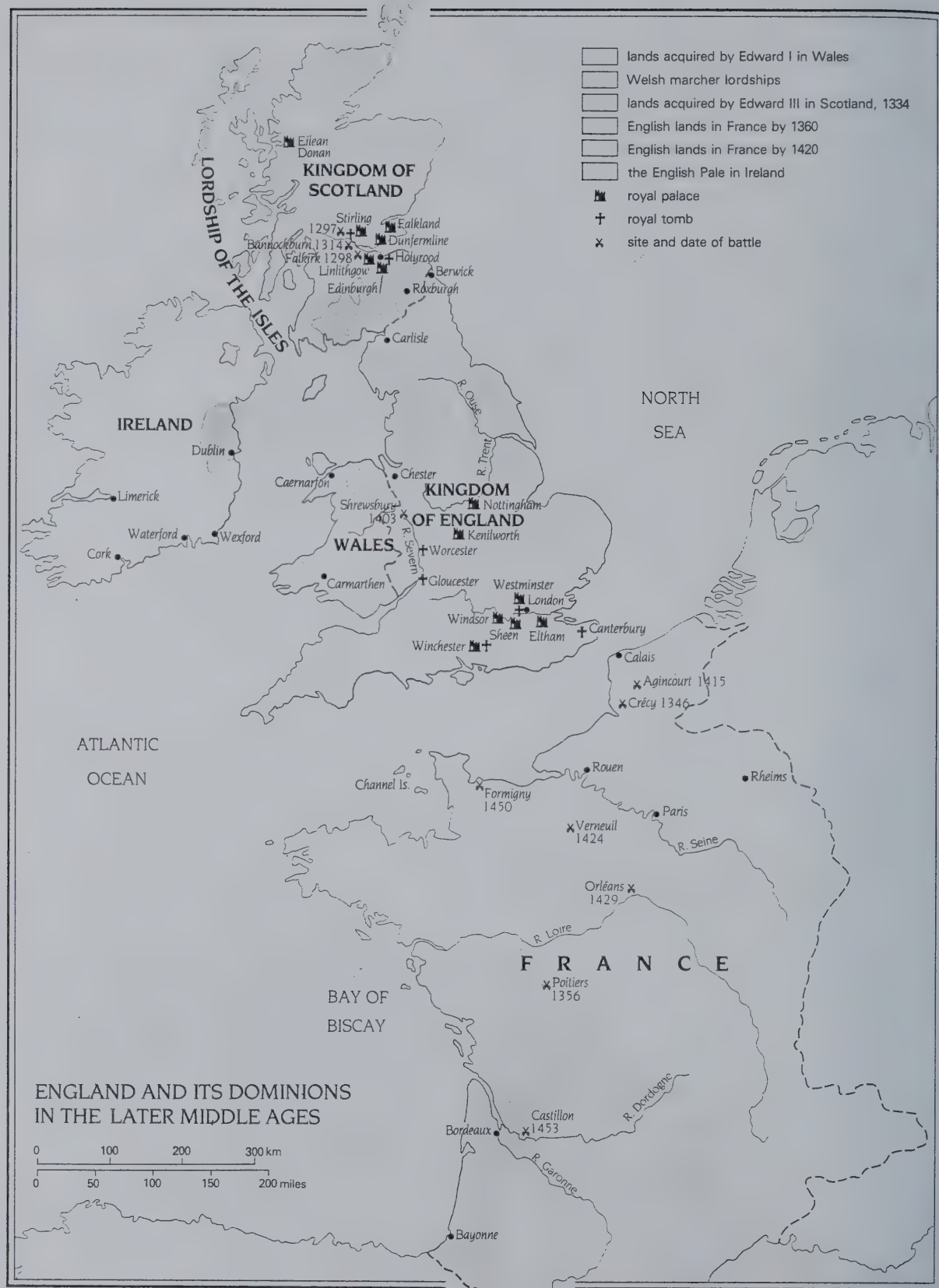
of Edward I's own son and heir, later King Edward II, and his heirs as kings of England. Henceforward, the royal lands in Wales (and by 1301 they also included Gwynedd) were indissolubly linked to the crown, two and a half centuries before the union of England and all Wales in 1536. But prior to Henry VIII's momentous act, kings of England were not kings of Wales—or indeed of any other of their dominions outside England.

What were these dominions? By the thirteenth century, the duchy of Normandy was no longer one of them. King John had lost that in 1204. His son, Henry III, recovered neither Normandy nor the counties of Poitou and Anjou after they were overrun by the French king. When Henry sealed the treaty of Paris with King Louis IX (1259), he recognized that these dominions of his predecessors were lost for good. Off the coast of northern France lay the Channel Islands, Jersey and Guernsey the largest of them. Remnant of the duchy of Normandy within sight of Normandy, and with a general affinity with the Norman coast, they continued to be ruled by the English king as 'duke of Normandy'—as curiously they still are. But their relationship with the king-duke was anomalous. The ambivalent psychology of the islanders, who were English by allegiance but French by tradition and culture, emerges in two expressions of sentiment in the mid-sixteenth century: the Jersey men then declared that they would 'rather die English than live French', while Guernsey's cannier inhabitants said that they 'wish to be friends of all rather than subjects of any'. Yet all of them could justifiably claim (as they did in the fifteenth century) that

The Isles were anciently part of the Duchy of Normandy and the Islanders still hold of the king as their duke, and . . . in the Islands, they hold and observe, and have always observed, the customs of Normandy . . . with certain other customs used in the Islands time out of mind.

Even today, the Channel Islanders are not represented in the British Parliament and Queen Elizabeth II sports in the islands the title of duke of Normandy—and neither islanders nor queen seem at all perturbed by this state of affairs.

The largest English dominion in France in the later Middle Ages was Gascony, with which was associated the title of duke of Aquitaine. It was an extensive territory, whose frontiers expanded and contracted according to the persistence of French encroachment and the vigour shown by English king-dukes and their southern French allies in resisting them. In Gascony, the English king was lord and duke, sure enough, and by the treaty of Paris (1259) King Louis IX acknowledged that Henry III was duke of Aquitaine. For his part, Henry was forced to concede that he owed homage for Gascony and therefore was King Louis's vassal. The treaty gave French kings some right to intervene in Gascon affairs, and this lay at the heart of the long Anglo-French conflict from Edward I's reign onwards which culminated in the Hundred Years War (1337–1453).



HENRY III

(1216–1272), king of England

... he acted imprudently and without advice of his nobles, alike rejecting all deliberation and prudence, which generally consider the results of actions beforehand ... he ought really to have learned wisdom, and taken pattern by his brother Richard ...

(Matthew Paris, *Greater Chronicle*, 1258–9)

HENRY'S minority (1216–27) accentuated the problems bequeathed by his father, King John. As self-willed as any Plantagenet, he was well educated and cultured, and could be affectionate and generous; but his naïve, foolish, even deceitful actions, combined with a poor military showing, created disrespect and contempt. He was hastily crowned at Gloucester (1216), and William Marshal (d. 1219) took charge of both king and kingdom. After the treaty of Kingston (1217), Louis of France departed, public order was restored, and Henry widely acknowledged as king. He was recrowned at Westminster (1220) and the Scottish king did homage and married his sister (1221). Hubert de Burgh's regime outlasted Henry's minority (1227) and provided sound government based on Magna Carta. But when Henry took the reins of government (1232), he made disastrous interventions in France (1230, 1242, and 1253), where the French nobility opposed the restoration of his lands; in England his tax demands were resented. Henry was lucky to negotiate the treaty of Paris with Louis IX (1259), thereby preserving his Gascon lands. At home there was rising criticism of taxation, subservience to the pope, and abuses in government. His favourites were unpopular, especially those from Poitou and the relatives of his wife, Eleanor of Provence, whom he married in 1236. His bizarre plan (1254) to accept the crown of Sicily for his son Edmund, and help the pope against the emperor, united opposition in Church and State. Henry's and Edmund's appearance in Parliament in Apulian dress aggravated matters. In 1258 the nobles insisted on reform, including a permanent council, control of appointments, and regular Parliaments (Provisions of Oxford, 1258, and Westminster, 1259). Despite illness, Henry schemed to defeat them: he induced the pope (1261) to absolve him from his oaths to accept reform, and Louis IX's arbitration (1264) of the dispute was in Henry's favour.



THE GILT-BRONZE EFFIGY OF KING HENRY III in Westminster Abbey. Commissioned from William Torel in 1291, the care-worn face may bear some resemblance to the crowned king at the time of his death.

When war broke out (1264), Simon de Montfort, Henry's brother-in-law, led the noble opposition. At Lewes (1264) Henry and his sons were captured, leaving de Montfort in charge of king and government, widening his support through Parliament. After Simon was killed at Evesham (1265), where Henry was wounded in the shoulder, the civil war ended. Henry was restored to full authority (1266) and the statute of Marlborough (1267) affirmed the customs of the realm, Magna Carta, and some Provisions of Westminster. In poor health (from 1270), Henry turned increasingly to Winchester, his birthplace. He also rebuilt Westminster Abbey, the greatest of the religious houses he patronized; there the remains of Edward the Confessor were solemnly translated (1269), whilst Henry, when he died, was buried in the old tomb—until Edward I reinterred him in 1292.

Richard Montfitchet

One of 25 barons appointed to rule the realm

1236 - made Justice of Royal Forest in Essex

1242 - high sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire
And governor of Hertfordshire Castle.

↓
son

Roger de Montfitchet - 3rd son

↓
son

John, tired of the Mont and spelled his name
"Fitchet" leaving off the "T"

He was granted Armorial bearings in the year
1263



THE PRINCESS SCOTA, daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt, landing on the shores of Scotland, to which she allegedly gave her name. This is one of the patriotic legends of the beginnings of Scotland which claim greater antiquity for Scotland and its monarchy than the English claimed for the English monarchy. Such legends were popular in the later Middle Ages and this picture is from a version (c.1425) of the history of Scotland known as *Scotichronicon*, from Inchcolm Abbey.

severely chided in the English Parliament, 'for as much as he ought of duty to be homager; and hold of you, sovereign lord, his said realm, as his progenitours have done before'.

Finally, the Isle of Man, where English rule was unequivocally established only in 1333, after centuries of Norwegian and then, from 1266, Scottish overlordship, had its own peculiar relationship with the English crown. It was an acknowledged 'kingdom'. Though a possession of Edward III and his successors as kings of England, in 1406 the island was granted in perpetuity to the wealthy Cheshire and Lancashire landowner, Sir John Stanley, and his heirs. On several occasions thereafter, legal opinion had it that Man was 'no part of the Realm of England', 'though in homage and subjection to it'; and as late as 1505, the earl of Derby, who was a Stanley and an English peer to his coronet, prided himself on being 'King of Man and the Iles' like his predecessors (he said). The almost mystical relationship which Man had with the English crown persists even today.

Complex, complicated, even confused, was the English king's relationship with his various dominions in the later Middle Ages, though he could readily and justifiably claim that all their inhabitants were his subjects and—even the Scots—owed allegiance to him. These claims were not identical nor everywhere enforceable, though some of them have survived to our own time.

The way in which English monarchs regarded the realm and its dominions in

EDWARD I

(1272–1307), king of England

In build he was handsome and of great stature, towering head and shoulders above the average ... His brow was broad, and the rest of his face regular, though a drooping of the left eyelid recalled his father's expression. He spoke with a stammer (or lisp), but did not lack a ready power of persuasion in argument.

(Nicholas Trevet, *Annals of Six Kings of England*)

AN autocratic, short-tempered man who was intolerant of criticism, he could be cruel and violent even towards his children. Yet there is no denying his talent for leadership, his fearlessness and energy, and his vision. He raised the crown's authority to new heights, undertook daunting enterprises in Wales, Scotland, and France, reformed royal government, and developed the common law. In his last decade commitments outstripped resources, and opposition to his obstinacy mounted. Given large estates in England, Wales, and Gascony at an early age (1254), as well as a wife, Eleanor of Castile (d. 1290), he gained military experience in the Barons' Wars. He led the royalist reaction after 1264 and the reconciliation between Henry III and the rebels owed much to his good sense. Like Louis IX a devotee of the crusade, he went to Egypt and Syria (1270) and returned in 1274 after his father's death (1272). He resumed the task of elevating the royal authority, rooting out abuses, defining royal and noble rights, restoring order, and improv-

ing justice by using Parliament and statutes (1275–90). He became known as 'the English Justinian'. He sought to implement English kings' claims to primacy in the British Isles. His wars against Llywelyn the Last (1276–7 and 1282–3) ended with the conquest of Llywelyn's principality and the reordering, by the statute of Wales (1284), of the royal lands in Wales, which were assigned to his son and heir (1301). In Scotland after the Maid of Norway's death (1290), he declared in favour of John Balliol as king and demanded recognition of his own suzerainty (1292). His determination to exercise this overlordship led to resistance and war, which was still being waged when Edward died at Burgh by Sands (1307). In the sixteenth century, 'Hammer of the Scots' was inscribed on his plain marble tomb in Westminster Abbey. In France, the feudal bond between the French king and Edward as duke of Aquitaine ruptured in war (1293). These conflicts were expensive and in 1294–7 the burden alienated clergy, merchants, and English landowners. Edward resented the nobles' 'Remonstrances' (1297) and was loath to make concessions or change his policies. When he died, his commitments were partly unfulfilled, his problems unsolved, and his high-handedness rankled. Yet his methods had emphasized the common law and the role of Parliament, and he set precedents which his successors must have regretted.



THE STONE HEADS, CROWNED, OF KING EDWARD I AND HIS SECOND WIFE, MARGARET OF FRANCE, in the form of corbels on the canopy above the Alard tomb in St Thomas's Church, Winchelsea, Sussex. Gervase Alard was appointed by Edward as admiral.

John Fitch of Fitch Castle of the North
in 1294

|
son
↓

William Fitch Widdington Northwest Essex 1294-
22nd year of King Edward I

events occurred during later minorities, notably those of Richard II (who was ten at his accession in 1377) and Henry VI (who was only nine months old when he became king in 1422). During these periods—and during the rare, serious illnesses of kings, such as the senility of Edward III in the 1370s and the mental collapse of Henry VI in the 1450s—nobles were usually in charge of decision-making and administration. They were often prone to political rivalries and personal jealousies, whilst the return to personal rule by the king himself was hazardous: it created its own tensions, often poisoned personal relationships, and led to criticism and opposition from those who had formerly enjoyed power and resented losing it. Personal kingship, the very essence of monarchy, could scarcely cope with the incapacity of the king.

The loss of English territories in France early in the thirteenth century meant that kings spent more time in England than had been common since 1016. They were henceforward able to give closer and more continuous personal attention to its government, whose administrative apparatus had become so much more sophisticated that it touched the king's subjects more often and in a larger number of ways than ever before. This, too, could cause tension. Criticism of the crown, especially by the nobles, became frequent in the decades after Henry III's personal rule began (1232). When this opposition was at its height by 1258, it found a focus in Parliament, where it received support from representatives of lesser landowners, merchants, and clergy. Such criticism, which was repeated on other occasions in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, never envisaged the abolition of the monarchy itself and rarely did the critics advocate depriving the king of his fundamental powers. The usual aim was to modify the way in which the king managed his government and to alter some of the policies he pursued. The personalities, policies, and habits of ruling of individual kings were most often the causes of friction—and determined the means by which criticism was countered. Edward I was not a man to brook much criticism, and his personality and qualities as a ruler effectively staved off opposition until the last ten years of his reign. By contrast, his father's policies and attitudes—particularly his indulgence towards his foreign relatives and his attachment to the papacy—were at the root of dangerous attacks levelled against Henry III in the 1240s and 1250s.

... he did not keep his promises, having little regard for the keys of the church and for the tenor of his Great Charter so many times paid for. Also he exalted his uterine brothers in a most intolerable manner, contrary to the law of the kingdom as though they had been born in this country ...

In addition the king was reproached with advancing and enriching all aliens, and with despising and pillaging his own natural subjects, to the ruin of the whole kingdom. And he was so needy, whilst others possessed money in abundance, that he could not, for want of money, recover the rights of the kingdom ... (Matthew Paris, *Greater Chronicle*, 1258)